

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /004 R

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DRAFTED BY NEA/ERABINGTON:MRC

APPROVED BY NEA:ERABINGTON

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 248524

FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON

FOLLOWING REPEAT DAMASCUS 4049 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN
BEIRUT CAIRO JIDDA MOSCOW TEL AVIV USCINCEUR DIA DATED 18 OCT
QUOTE;

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 4049

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL, SY, IS, US

SUBJECT: ALLEGATIONS OF SYRIAN MILITARY INTENTIONS TOWARD
GOLAN AND UNDOF RENEWAL

REF: DAMASCUS 4048

1. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS MADE BY LOCAL UPI/AP STRINGERS OSTWANI AND
FARES OCT 17 RE GOLAN DEVELOPMENT PLANNING WERE MORE OMINOUS.
WHEN EMBOFF QUESTIONED OSTWANI ABOUT ISRAELI ALLEGATIONS THAT
SYRIA EVACUATING CIVILIANS FROM GOLAN REGION, SHE RESPONDED
THAT THIS WAS NOT JUST ALLEGATION BUT ACCURATE REPORT. ASKED
WHY SARG UNDERTAKING SUCH PROVOCATIVE MEASURE, SHE STATED
CONFIDENTIALLY THAT SHE HAD "LEARNED" SYRIA INTENDED TO CON-
DUCT 48-HOUR OPERATION INTO GOLAN REGION TO OCCUPY FURTHER
PIECE OF ISRAELI CONTROLLED TERRITORY. AS RESULT, SHE CLAIMED,
SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD BE OBLIGED TO RETURN TO
SYRIA AND NEGOTIATE COMPREHENSIVE SETTLEMENT. WHEN
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EMBOFF EXPRESSED INCREDULITY OVER STORY, SHE REPEATED,

"YOU WILL SEE. IT WILL HAPPEN SOON." SHE PROMISED TO CONTACT EMBASSY IF SHE LEARNED MORE.

2. FARES TOLD CAO, IN CONVERSTATION REPORTING HIS "EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW" WITH "HIGH MILITARY SOURCE," THAT SYRIA WAS ENGAGED IN ATTEMPT TO BUILD UP POLITICAL/MILITARY PRESSURE IN PERIOD LEADING TO NOVEMBER 30 UNDOF RENEWAL DEADLINE. ACCORDING TO FARES, "IF ANYTHING HAPPENS, TI WILL BE QUICK, COUPLE DAY ACTION AFTER WHICH SYRIA WOULD STOP OPERATIONS AND US WOULD CONTROL ISRAEL" (TO PREVENT IT FROM UNDERTAKING SERIOUS REPOSTE). FARES ASKED CAO TO PASS ON TO AMBASSADOR THAT RECENTLY FOR FIRST TIME HE PERMPTTED TO FILE STORY SUGGESTING THAT SARG MIGHT NOT RENEW UNDOF MANDATE.

3. COMMENT: ALLEGATION THAT SYRIA REMOVING CIVILIANS FROM GOLAN REGION WOULD CERTAINLY BE PROVOCATIVE ACTION IF NOT ADEQUATELY EXPLAINED. WE WILL TRY TO DEVELOP FURTHER INFORMATION. IN MEANTIME, WE RELUCTANT TO ASCRIBE UNDUE IMPORTANCE TO OSTWANT'S COMMENTS ABOUT IMMINENCE OF SYRIAN AGGRESSIVE OPERATIONS. WHILE SHE HAS PROVIDED EMBASSY WITH SOME SOLID INFORMATION IN PAST, SHE ALSO TENDS TO OVER-DRAMATIZE BITS AND PIECES SHE COLLECTS. HOWEVER, BOTH SHE AND FARES HAVE HIT UPON SCENARIO OF QUICK THRUST INTO GOLAN WITH ASSIGNED ROLE FOR US IN AFTERMATH. WHILE THIS MAY NOT REPRESENT AGREED-UPON SARG OPERATIONAL STRATEGY, CORRESPONDENTS MAY HAVE TURNED UP OPTION UNDER CONSIDERATION BY SARG.
MURPHY UNQUOTE
INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, MILITARY BUILDUP, PRESS COMMENTS, ALLEGATIONS, INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE248524
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MRC
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750363-0157
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751041/aaaabkcm.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 DAMASCUS 4048
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 JUN 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <03 NOV 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ALLEGATIONS OF SYRIAN MILITARY INTENTIONS TOWARD GOLAN AND UNDOF RENEWAL
TAGS: MPOL, SY, IS, US
To: TUNIS
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006